

# Questions and Answers

## Water Use

### When do I need a Water Use Permit?

You will need a Water Use Permit to:

- dewater
- irrigate a golf course
- irrigate crops with either well water or surface water
- irrigate nursery stock
- water livestock from a well
- irrigate residential landscaping from either wells or surface waters
- withdraw water for industrial use
- withdraw water for public water supply

You will *not need* a Water Use Permit for:

- single family homes or duplexes (provided all water is withdrawn from one well)
- fire fighting water wells
- salt water use
- reclaimed water use

### What is the application procedure?

The procedure can be complex if your project has unusual features. However, here are the typical steps:

(Optional) Schedule a pre-application conference with District staff. While this meeting is not required, it can be helpful. During the meeting, staff can tell you what information they will need and identify potential complications.

After the pre-application conference, submit **four copies** of your completed permit application ([Form 0645](#)) to the appropriate location. (*See also "What information will I need to provide?" below.*) The District then has 30 days to review the application and ask for any necessary additional information. You, in turn, have 90 days to supply the information.

Sometimes more rounds of information-gathering are necessary to clarify specific points. In these cases, District staff has 30 days to request information and the applicant has 30 days to respond.

If the application is not complete within 240 days of the initial submittal, the application may be denied unless you make a written request for an extension before the deadline. If the District fails to meet the deadlines, the permit is automatically approved.

Once the application is complete, the District has 60 days to issue general permits and 90 days to approve individual permits.

## **What information will I need to provide?**

District staff members will ask you to provide information that will help them evaluate your application and the potential impacts of your proposed activities on ground or surface water systems and water-related resources. The information requested varies according to the type and complexity of the project, but what follows are general guidelines, along with a short explanation of the criteria used by the District to assess your application.

A Water Use Permit application typically should contain a completed application form and the appropriate permit application processing fee, plus information such as:

- the quantity and source of the water requested
- the location of the water source
- the location of the wells (for groundwater) or points of withdrawal (for surface water)
- what the water will be used for
- water conservation and recycling plans

Please remember to submit **four copies** of the application and all supporting material.

## **RENEWALS**

### **Who needs a renewal?**

Renewals are required for all Individual and Major General Water Use Permits with a use type of irrigation. This can be landscape, golf course, nursery, livestock or agricultural irrigation.

### **Why do I need to get a renewal if I already have a water use permit, and is there a grandfathering clause so I don't have to get a renewal?**

There is no "grandfathering clause" or exception that states that once you have had a permit for a period of time that you do not have to get renewed. All Individual and Major General Water Use Permits will need to be renewed.

## **What will happen if I don't renew my water use permit?**

Failure to renew the water use permits will result in enforcement action, which could result in fines and the requirement to obtain a permit to establish the right to use water. The only exception is if the permitted property is no longer being irrigated.

## **What expiration date applies to my project if my project crosses multiple basin boundaries?**

The expiration date for the permit shall be the date associated with the basin containing the majority of the irrigated acreage. For example, if you have 20 contiguous irrigated acres in Basin A and 75 contiguous irrigated acres in Basin B, then you would have the expiration date that applies to Basin B.

## **How do I get a renewal?**

The District will provide a renewal notice at least 30 days prior to the basin application date applicable to your project. This notice will include an application form for permit renewal as well as information the District currently has regarding the well, pumps, culverts, and crops for your project. Complete all required portions of the application, and review the project information. If the information is correct, please return the information sheets with your application form. If the information is partially correct, please make corrections in the blanks provided. If the information is not correct or the information is new, please complete the applicable Tables, also included with your renewal notice, and provide a new site map. Please be aware that you may be required to provide additional information such as proof of ownership or control of the project site and reasonable assurance that your use of water will not harm the resource or its users, as defined by current District rules and criteria. *(See website forms and instructions at: [Water Use Permitting website](#) or contact District Staff for further information).* Please remember to **submit 4 copies** of all application package documents.

Contact District Water Use Staff at [wupermitting@sfwmd.gov](mailto:wupermitting@sfwmd.gov) to verify mailing address and to receive a package.

## **If changes to the project have occurred such as the addition of wells or pumps, increase in acreage or allocation, or change in land use, can I include these in the renewal process?**

The Permit holders will be sent all the information that the District has for your project. The applicant will be asked to verify all of this information. If changes, such as the ones mentioned above, have occurred which require further review by District Staff, you will need to submit the information that has changed. Please be aware that you may be required to provide additional information such as proof of ownership or control of the project site and reasonable assurances that your use of water will not harm the resource or its users, as defined by current District rules and criteria.

## **How do I know whether or not the project was located in a reduced threshold area?**

In August of 2002, the reduced threshold areas were eliminated. These areas were designated by the District as restricted use areas due to resource depletion, saline water intrusion or other water availability issues. Therefore, projects which were located in these specific reduced threshold areas will not have the restrictions that were in effect for the previously issued permit.

## **What will the renewal cost and how long is the duration of the permit?**

See the below fee schedule to determine the appropriate fee for your project. Fees vary based on the allocation amount. The duration of the permit can be for up to 20 years depending on the type of permit issued for each project (Major GP, Minor GP, Individual) and other criteria. Permit duration for Minor GP's is usually 20 years or project duration.

### **General Water Use Permit**

Maximum Monthly Allocation

- Up to 3 million gallons per month (mgm) (Minor) \$350
- Greater than 3 mgm through 15 mgm (Major) \$1000

**Individual Irrigation Water Use Permit with a duration of 20 years \$1000**

### **Individual Irrigation Water Use Permit with a duration of 20 years**

Maximum monthly allocation

- Greater than 15 mgm through 30 mgm \$1600
- Greater than 30 mgm through 300 mgm \$3400
- Greater than 300 mgm \$5600

## **What changes can I expect if all of the permit information has remained the same from the previously issued permit?**

Some of the older permits may have changes to limiting conditions such as monthly pumpage reporting requirements, which were not previously required. In addition, with no proposed changes to the permit, the District may issue a permit with a duration of up to 20 years if certain other criteria are met.

## **I don't understand the forms or need assistance with the renewal process. Where can I get help?**

There will be some informal training sessions/workshops provided on how to apply for a renewal or District Staff can be contacted to assist with any problems or questions. There will also be information provided on the District's Water Use Renewal web site and you may email Staff with questions at [wupermitting@sfwmd.gov](mailto:wupermitting@sfwmd.gov).

## **Under the new rules, my permit qualifies for a Major General Permit (3 million gallons per month through 15 million gallons per month) instead of the previously classified Individual Permit. What will be the changes needed?**

The renewal process for a Major General Water Use Irrigation Permit and an Individual Water Use Permit are the same except that a Major General Water Use Permit has a shorter review time and the permit is issued by Staff not the Governing Board. For more information on the different types of permits go to [Water Use Permitting](#) website.

## **Who is required to use reclaimed water, and who do I contact to find out if it is available for my project?**

According to Section 3.2.3 of the Water Use Basis of Review (BOR), "when reclaimed water is readily available it must be used in place of higher quality water sources, unless it is demonstrated by the applicant that its use is either not environmentally, economically or technically feasible." Agricultural uses involving the growth of edible fruits and vegetables are NOT required to utilize reclaimed water. All other uses must inquire about the availability of utilizing reclaimed water for their project. Your local Water Utility or Treatment facility can be contacted to inquire whether reclaimed water is available for your project. A letter from the appropriate utility should be included in the renewal application. A "Back Up" permit for emergency use in the event that flows are curtailed or interrupted may be issued with a duration of 20 years. According to criteria, the District shall consider the former reclaimed water end-user who has lost its supply to best serve the public interest under Section 373.233, F.S. Minor GP's are not required to submit a feasibility analysis.

## **What information do I need to provide for water use accounting?**

[Click here](#) to view the list of some available calibration service providers (this list is not an exclusive list of providers; other providers may be available in these areas). [Download the Calibration Handbook 2006](#), which also includes Water Use accounting methods.

## **Do I need to provide a water conservation plan and what information do I need to provide if required?**

All Individual Water Use Irrigation and Major General Water Use Permit applicants for landscape or golf course irrigation projects must develop a water conservation program including the use of Florida-Friendly landscaping principles and the installation of rain sensor devices, automatic switches or other method that can override the operation of the system when adequate rainfall has occurred. This program must be submitted with the permit application and adhered to once the permit is issued.

**Can I add non-contiguous parcels to my existing permit?**

Yes, noncontiguous parcels in the same county may apply for one permit encompassing all such parcels, provided it is shown that the water use for each parcel is from the same water use classification. If multiple water use classifications such as drinking water and landscape irrigation are served by separate withdrawal facilities on separate parcels, separate water use permits shall be required.

**What if my renewal application is found to be lacking information or a fee?**

If a renewal application requires additional information or is lacking a fee, a letter will be sent requesting these items. An application will not be considered complete until all the information has been satisfactorily provided. In addition, if any application is not complete within 240 days of the date of application, it may be processed for denial.